



DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION

2006-2011 STRATEGIC PLAN

Adopted July 27, 2006

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2006 – 2011 Strategic Plan

INTRODUCTION

The Delta is a fragile ecosystem that serves as a vital natural resource and hub of economic activity. The Delta Protection Act of 1992 (Act) is intended to protect and enhance the Delta's resources as provided for in the Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta (Regional Plan). The Strategic Plan, a product of the Delta Protection Commission's (Commission) visioning process, is meant to further the Commission's implementation of the Act and Regional Plan.

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OVERVIEW OF OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

The purpose of the Commission is to protect, preserve and enhance the Delta as it exists today serving multiple functions, including, but not limited to:

- agricultural land preservation;
- habitat protection; and
- enhancing recreational opportunities.

Opportunities for achieving the above purposes include:

- infrastructure bond funding;
- grants;
- collaborate with relevant local, state, federal, and private sector entities;
- participate in Delta visioning; and
- propose legislation to expand Commission representation and enhance effectiveness.

Threats to the above include:

- insufficient levee integrity (including subsidence);
- proximity to seismic fault zones;
- population growth and increased demands on all infrastructure elements of the Delta;
- potential increase in water supply demands for 23 million plus Californians;
- urban encroachment in the Primary and Secondary Zones;
- market pressures on agribusiness, i.e., conversion of ag land to non-agriculture uses;
- insufficient integrated regional planning and implementation;
- disputes over public access;
- environmental influences such as invasion of non-native species in the waterways, rising ocean levels, water quality issues etc; and
- greater need for Commission stewardship and social responsibility, e.g., abandoned vessels, dumping and pollution.

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Vision:

The Delta in the year 2011 is a dynamic and living system.

Health Indicators for the Delta:

- An integrated approach to water, land use and resource management planning sufficient to protect, maintain, enhance and restore the cultural and economic sustainability of residents, businesses, agricultural and recreational interests consistent with a healthy ecosystem;
- Sufficient flood protection (e.g., levee maintenance and improvement, and subsidence mitigation) for residential, commercial, agricultural and public infrastructure; and
- Sufficient fresh water flow and water quality in and through the Delta to meet the needs of Delta water users (residential, commercial and agricultural), recreation, habitat preservation and water quality.

Mission:

To protect, maintain, and where possible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the Delta environment consistent with the Delta Protection Act and the Regional Plan, including, but not limited to agriculture, wildlife habitat and recreational activities; to ensure orderly, balanced conservation and development of Delta land resources and improved flood protection.

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Program Strategy: *Fully implement the Act.*

- 1.) Effectively integrate the Regional Plan into local government general plans.
 - Work proactively with local planning departments to ensure full integration of the Regional Plan into general plans.
- 2.) Act as the appeal body for inconsistencies between general plans and the Regional Plan.
- 3.) Implement the Regional Plan on a prioritized basis and consistent with the Act.
 - Develop and implement annual work plans that target implementation needs flexibly and in partnership with stakeholders.
- 4.) Participate actively in the development of a long-range Delta-wide vision and management plan in which the Regional Plan would be included.
- 5.) Initiate a proactive approach to collaborative participation in legislative and regulatory efforts so that the Commission's influence is represented in all discussions of proposed relevant legislation and regulatory change.

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Funding Strategy: *Fully develop funding strategies permitted under the Act.*

- 1.) Continue to receive funds as designated under the Act.
 - Submit a Budget Change Proposal in 2006 – 2007 to restore budget for 2007 – 2008.
- 2.) Maximize funding allowable under the Act.
 - Apply for grants;
 - Pursue bond opportunities;
 - Consider member contributions for specific activities and tasks; and
 - Pursue other financial support as permitted by the Act, such as gifts, donations, rents, royalties, and other financial support from private sources.
- 3.) Efficiently manage the Commission's resources.
 - Streamline Budget Unit components.
- 4.) Participate in collaborative efforts to develop funding strategies that fully consider the economic benefits and costs of achieving the Commission's vision of the Delta.
- 5.) Promote strategies for the funding, acquisition, and maintenance of voluntary cooperative arrangements, such as conservation easements between property owners and conservation groups that protect wildlife habitat and agricultural land, while not impairing the integrity of infrastructure, including levees.

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Leadership Strategy: *Develop and maintain the partnership between Commission and staff.*

1.) Ensure a well-informed and effective membership body of Commissioners that reflects the diversity of Delta stakeholders.

- Develop and implement Commissioner orientation program.
- Establish meeting attendance norms and processes.

2.) Hire the best qualified and highest performing staff possible to carry out the responsibilities of the Commission, consistent with the Act, this Strategic Plan and the Administrative Work Plan.

- Evaluate long-term needs for positions and levels of expertise.
- Develop comprehensive human resources policies and implement these consistently for all staff according to State requirements and policies.

Strategic Work Plan Goals for Program Administration

1. PUBLIC RELATIONS

Goals:

- Recognition as the voice of those that live, work, and play in the Delta, consistent with the Regional Plan and the Delta Protection Act.
- Become proactive, integral part of local and regional land use and visioning processes.

2. BUDGET

Goals:

- Develop Budget Maintenance Program.
- Identify and pursue opportunities for long-term funding sustainability.

3. STAFFING

Goals:

- Develop comprehensive human resource program, consistent with State requirements and policies.
- Evaluate long-term position expertise and level needs.

4. COMMISSIONERS

Goals:

- Develop and implement Commissioner orientation package.
- Enhance Commissioner meeting attendance.

5. LEGISLATION

Goals:

- Develop tools for effective influence through legislative authority.

Strategic Work Plan Goals for Implementation of the Regional Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta

Reader's Note: In this section of the Strategic Work Plan, text in paragraph form is taken from the Regional Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta, adopted pursuant to the Delta Protection Act. Text in bullet point form has been added as a result of the visioning process.

1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIONAL PLAN FOR THE PRIMARY ZONE OF THE DELTA

Goals:

- Complete summary of accomplished policy recommendations cited in the Management Plan.
- Establish priority/timeline for completion of remaining tasks.
- Identify unaddressed areas.
- Develop tools for proactive “integration” of Management Plan into local general plans and planning resources resulting in a positive rather than adversarial image for the Commission.

2. ENVIRONMENT

Goals: Preserve and protect the natural resources of the Delta, including soils. Promote protection of remnants of riparian habitat. Promote seasonal flooding and agriculture practices on agricultural lands to maximize wildlife use of the hundreds of thousands of acres of lands in the Delta. Promote levee maintenance and rehabilitation to preserve the land areas and channel configurations in the Delta.

- Enhance educational awareness of the benefits of an adaptive working landscapes approach to managing agricultural and habitat resources in the Delta.
- Explore options for balancing environmental mitigation with other land uses, including agriculture and flood protection.
- Explore options for land use practices (Best Management Practices) that reduce or reverse subsidence e.g., Sherman Island.

3. UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal: Protect the Delta from excessive construction of utilities and infrastructure facilities, including those that support uses and development outside the Delta. Where construction of new utility and infrastructure facilities is appropriate, ensure the impacts of such new construction on the integrity of levees, wildlife, and agriculture are minimized.

- Pursue sources of reference relative to transportation related issues in the Delta.
- Consider long-term impact mitigation opportunities.

4. LAND USE

Goals: Protect the unique character and qualities of the Primary Zone by preserving the cultural heritage and strong agricultural base of the Primary Zone. Direct new residential, commercial, and industrial development within the existing communities as currently designated and where appropriate services are available.

- Develop tools for establishing a baseline for resources in the Primary Zone.

5. AGRICULTURE

Goal: Support long-term viability of commercial agriculture and discourage inappropriate development of agricultural lands.

- Establish forum for Delta-wide collaboration among agricultural interests on common activities and issues.
- Establish a program for Delta agricultural easements.

6. WATER

Goal: Protect long-term water quality in the Delta for agriculture, municipal, industrial, water-contact recreation, and fish and wildlife habitat uses, as well as all other designated beneficial uses.

- Develop programs for Delta-wide collaboration to effectively and efficiently address water quality issues including salinity intrusion.
- Participate in data collection/monitoring programs relative to salinity (X2).

7. RECREATION AND ACCESS

Goals: Promote continued recreational use of the land and waters of the Delta. Ensure that needed facilities that allow such uses are constructed, maintained, and supervised. Protect landowners from unauthorized recreational uses on private lands. Maximize dwindling public funds for recreation by promoting public-private partnerships and multiple use of Delta lands.

- Establish programs for recognition of the value of recreational access to appreciate the unique resources of the Delta.

8. LEVEES

Goals: Support the improvement and long-term maintenance of Delta levees by coordinating permit reviews and guidelines for levee maintenance. Develop a long-term funding program for levee maintenance. Protect levees in emergency situations. Give levee rehabilitation and maintenance the priority over other uses of levee areas.

- Pursue efforts to enhance recognition of public health and safety as a priority.

9. MARINE PATROL, BOATER EDUCATION, AND SAFETY PROGRAMS

Goals:

- Pursue opportunities for development of Delta-wide programs to enhance boater awareness and an appreciation for recreational boating.